



SUB-COMMITTEE ON SAFETY OF  
NAVIGATION  
46th session  
Agenda item 15

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## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### International Call Sign for Shore Signal Stations

#### Note by the Government of the United States

#### SUMMARY

**Executive summary:** This document explains the need for designating a unique international call sign for shore signal stations.

**Action to be taken:** Paragraph 6.

**Related documents:** International Code of Signals.

1 The Government of the United States proposes to amend the International Code of signals by assigning a single letter visual signal (plus one numeral) as a call or address for shore signal stations.

2 Any ship or shore station may use the International Code of Signals for communication in situations related essentially to safety of navigation or persons, especially when language difficulties arise.

3 During visual signaling, especially flashing light, the assignment of a call sign or identity signal to shore stations helps improve the communications and eliminate confusion. Such a call sign allows ships and other shore stations to address their signals to a specific shore signal station.

4 While the 1931 International Code of Signals, Vol. I (Visual) added the single letter “Z” “to be used to address or call shore stations,” the current International Code of Signals, has no provision for calling, addressing, or indicating shore signal stations.

5 The “Z” flag now has two meanings (I require a tug or I am shooting nets). The NATO/Allied system uses an alphabetic “flag superior” (type indicator) plus one or two numerals for ship visual call signs. Addition of a numeral to the “Z” flag would create a signal that conforms to that system.

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**Action requested of the Sub-Committee**

6 The Sub-Committee is invited to approve the creation of a unique call sign for shore signal stations, consisting of the letter “Z” with one numeral. Proposed text for Chapter XII “SINGLE LETTER SIGNALS WITH COMPLEMENTS” (page 24) to read as follows:

Z—with one numeral.....To call or address shore visual signal stations.  
Numeral to be approved by local port  
authority.

7 The United States requests that the effective date of implementation would be six months after adoption by the Maritime Safety Committee.

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